

decidedly not long enough for an editor to decide whether or not to make a cut. However, in this two-gun Hughes tube, the second cathode ray gun, displaced to one side, shoots a continuous stream of electrons through the wire grid, or screen, thus keeping the single picture fluorescent, and therefore visible, for as long as fifteen or twenty minutes.

Of course, there is much more that could be told: how the electrons from the second gun decide whether or not to penetrate the grid to make the fluorescent screen light or dark; or how John Silva's circuits pick out a single picture. However, the important point is that now, at last, videotape has the equipment it needs to rival motion pictures in artistic composition. Directors and cutters are now able to see still pictures of scenes that are to be cut, and they can now match one frame to another so that the viewer will not be conscious of any cutting. The TV-ola puts videotape on a par with film, at least as far as ease of editing is concerned.

THE prototype TV-ola is contained in a console mounted on wheels; it plugs into any videotape recorder. It is about half as big as an Ampex videotape recorder. Across the top half of its front are mounted four five-inch Hughes storage tubes. On the desk part of the console are groups of pushbuttons that, when pressed, activate various operations. They are designated "Mark," "Model," "Splatter," and other names meaningful to videotape editors. The TV-ola can be instructed, when the proper buttons are pushed, to pick out four individual pictures located 1, 1/3, 1/10, or 1/30 of a second apart on the tape. Here's how it works:

The editor decides, after viewing the tape, just where he should cut. Then, about one second before he sees the desired editing point, he pushes the button that places a "start beep" sound (a 3,000-cycle-per-second tone) on the cue track of the tape and also starts what is called the "splatter timing" circuitry. The four viewing tubes will then "freeze" four separate pictures: the one occurring at the starting point, a picture one second later, a picture two seconds later, and, on the fourth tube, a picture occurring three seconds later. Let's say the editor decides then that he should cut the tape somewhere between the pictures on viewing tubes 2 and 3. By rewinding the tape to the "start beep" and pushing the 1/3-second buttons, he can then view individual frames occurring at 1/3-second intervals, beginning at the end of the first second of tape following the "start beep." He can then repeat, narrowing the choice down to 1/10-second in-

tervals and, finally, down to 1/30-second intervals; the last interval means that each image will be a consecutive frame reproduced from the tape. When he sees the frame at which he wants to cut, he pushes the "edit marker beep" (a 400-cycle-per-second tone), which is a positive aural cue for cutting the videotape.

ONCE an editor has become accustomed to using the TV-ola he may skip one or two of the operations I have described and make his choice of a cutting point much more directly. And he can mark one reel for cutting, put it aside, and find a point in a separate reel to which he wants to cut. The operation is rapid and exact. An editor can even see how a tape will edit before it is cut. The tape can be marked, say, for three cuts, and run through the TV-ola. The last frame of "edited" scene No. 1 can be frozen on viewer No. 1, the first frame of "edited" scene No. 2 on viewer No. 2, the last frame of "edited" scene No. 2 on viewer No. 3, and the first frame of "edited" scene No. 3 on viewer No. 4. If the scenes as marked for cutting are satisfactory, the tape can be reeled off the recorder and the actual cutting performed by aural cueing on a much simpler and cheaper machine. If the scenes are not satisfactory, no harm has been done; the cue marks are erased from the tape and the process of editing gone through again.

As far as the economics of television recording—and "movies" made by videotape methods—are concerned, the TV-ola promises a great change for the better. Editing without the TV-ola is extremely time-consuming; it may now be measured in minutes instead of hours. And it is now an *exact* edit, not an approximate edit, with resultant "twitches" caused by inaccurate cutting. This reduction in editing time, plus the ability to cut by the audible edit marks using a simple audio playback machine, will



mean that more editing will be economically possible, thus making for more artistic productions.

The future of videotape now looks brighter than ever. The only serious drawback to its employment in many situations has been overcome by John Silva's invention, the TV-ola. We look forward to brilliantly composed and edited "live" videotape programs—even animation on tape—before very long.

Gould Takes Napoleon—Again

BEETHOVEN: "Wellington's Victory," Opus 91; GROFÉ: *Grand Canyon Suite*. Morton Gould and his orchestra. RCA Victor LSC-2433. \$2.98.

This record boasts authoritative notes—on the technical procedures at Manhattan Center—by its producer, Joseph Habig, without telling us too much of the music itself. The disc is billed as a "Stereo Spectacular," as was the same company's recent release of the "1812" and Ravel's "Bolero" by the same forces, and Habig's commentary ends on this triumphant note: "You have heard much about Morton Gould's recording of '1812'—and now here is his '1813'!"

To be sure, "Wellington's Victory," or "The Battle of Vittoria," is the Beethoven counterpart of Tchaikovsky's more familiar celebration of another Napoleonic defeat, and it is no more distinguished as music, although Mr. Habig might have acknowledged that Beethoven did give it an opus number and that it was introduced at the same concert that included the premieres of the Seventh and Eighth Symphonies, neither of which was received as warmly as the "Battle Symphony."

This "Beethoven Lollipop" is certainly worth having on records, and the recording itself is a stunning success, one of the finest arguments for stereo I've heard yet. The music is good fun, with its drum rolls, fanfares, and familiar tunes ("Rule Britannia," "*Malbrough s'en va t'en guerre*," "God Save the King"), and the performance it gets from Gould is probably exactly the kind it deserves, making the most of its very colorful effects.

An earlier monophonic version by René Leibowitz on Oceanic, however (still in the catalogue, but hard to find), by letting the effects more or less take care of themselves, gave this a trifle more musical substance and made the composer easier to recognize. The concluding "Symphony of Victory," in particular, is quite respectable middle-period Beethoven, with some especially imaginative writing for the horn.

Gould's new "Wellington's Victory" will certainly fill the principal requirement, that of making the score available on disc. If it is not a match for the earlier one interpretively, perhaps it is a bit incongruous to be so serious about such a piece. Surely admirers of Ferde Grofé never heard it so good. The recording is simply gorgeous.

—RICHARD D. FREED.

Recordings in Review

The Elman Repertory

MASSNET: "Meditation" ("Thais"); ARENSKY: *Serenade*; SCHUMANN: "Träumerei"; CUI: "Orientale"; DRIGO: "Valse Bluette"; SARASATE: "Zigeunerweisen"; SCHUBERT: "Ave Maria"; DVORAK: *Humoresque*; GOSSEC: *Gavotte*; CHOPIN: *Nocturne in E flat*; SCHUMANN: "Vogel als Prophet"; BEETHOVEN: *Minuet in G*; TCHAIKOVSKY: *Melodie*. Mischa Elman, violin, with Joseph Seiger, piano. Vanguard VSD 2048, \$5.95.

The description of this disc as the "Elman Jubilee Record Celebrating Fifty Years of Violinistic Triumph" is, for once, an understatement. True, it is now fifty-two years since Elman made his New York debut, the first of what seemed an unending stream of brilliant performers from the studio of Leopold Auer to achieve world-wide fame. But in fact Elman has been playing these pieces, man and boy, since he was heard by Sarasate in Odessa before the turn of the century.

What is more, he has never played any one of them better, if as well. At first reading, this would seem a rash statement, as if anyone who first heard Elman "only" forty-five years ago could answer for what happened prior to that, or elsewhere in the world since! But the famous recording of Dvorak's "Humoresque" dates from 1910, and this one is at least its equal in sound, if in another mood of "humor" as befits the product of sixty-nine versus nineteen.

Insofar as such pieces as the "Meditation," "Ave Maria," "Träumerei," and "Valse Bluette" are concerned, the question is not so much what other violinist could play them as well, as what other violinist would have the patience, love of the instrument, and devotion to its best interests to apply Elman's kind of care to every note and nuance.

Lieder singers, we observe from time to time, come to an appreciation of such subtlety in molding a melodic line as they master their craft—unfortunately, just as the means for communicating it begin to wear thin. Elman's intimate awareness of the function of every note is now at its ripest while he still, fortunately, possesses the steadiness of hand to draw the long tones of Massenet or sprinkle the air with showers of sparks in Sarasate.



Mischa Elman—"has never played them better."

The results throughout are merely marvelous. Seiger performs his task to the King's (Elman's) taste, and the recording gives us more of the Elman personality in the literature he has made his own than any previous presentation of it.

Britten's New "Nocturne"

BRITTEN: "Nocturne" (*Opus 60*). *Interludes from "Peter Grimes."* Benjamin Britten with an instrumental ensemble and Peter Pears, tenor; Britten conducting the orchestra of Covent Garden. London CS 6179, \$5.98.

Whatever else may be said of his accomplishments, no one can regard Benjamin Britten as other than industrious in pursuit of his calling. Not yet fifty, Britten has already added to the *Opus 60* noted above a setting of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" which has just had its premiere at Aldeburgh (Suffolk). If practice makes perfect, Britten should soon be on the verge of that happy accomplishment.

The simple fact seems to be that Britten is one of the few musicians of our time who devotes himself, year-round, to composing—with time out for an occasional recording session or other performance (almost always of his own music). Nor can anyone impugn the high average quality of his production, which, as in the case of this "Nocturne" (poems of Shelley, Tennyson, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Keats, and Shakespeare), is full of ingenuity, resource, and good judgment in treatment of words.

What is absent, however, is the kind of unaverage, restless surge that gives

a work of art life as well as existence, the impulse to expressivity that bursts the boundaries of "form" (in the social rather than the musical sense), and gives us a powerful indecency now and then as well as so many polished pleasures.

I regret to observe that Britten sounds more and more like William Walton in these settings, for it implies the inevitable destination—a knighthood and status as court composer, which may make him top man in British musical circles, but leave him short of some international goals for which, it once seemed, he might qualify. I regret, also, to note that the poetic texts are absent, which is expecting rather too much of Pears's enunciation when the music as well as the words are unfamiliar. I do hear, however, that in England "the cats cry me-you," which makes them definitely more U than our American cats, which—as everybody knows—"cry me-yow." The seven obligatory parts are splendidly played by Alexander Murray (flute), Roger Lord (English horn), Gervase de Peyer (clarinet), William Waterhouse (bassoon), Barry Tuckwell (horn), Denis Blyth (timpani), and Osian Ellis (harp), making a fine blend with the string orchestra. The "Grimes" excerpts are from the stunning new set directed by the composer.

The "Cleiner" Schumann

SCHUMANN: *Concerto in A minor*. Van Cliburn, piano, with Fritz Reiner conducting the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. RCA Victor LSC 2455, \$5.98.

Not, perhaps, since the Horowitz-Toscanini collaboration on the Tchaikovsky concerto has a recording in this literature carried with it so many imponderables. A pianist and a conductor separated by decades and by temperament, performing a work neither had recorded previously, did not promise an outcome with a mutually agreeable point of view. What has come about, however, is something in which neither the personality of Cliburn or Reiner (or, for that matter, Reiner or Cliburn) dominates. Rather, it is the product of a new entity which might be called Cleiner, in which qualities of each penetrate the other and bring about a merged artistic personality.

This, in turn, is responsible for both the virtues and faults of an accomplishment which is of particular credit to RCA Victor's technical team (Richard Mohr and Lewis Layton). Certainly Reiner's experience and judgment have given Cliburn a tighter frame, a firmer